



**OVERCHURCH**  
INFANT SCHOOL  
**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Introduction**

At Overchurch Infant School we recognise the importance of good attendance and expect all children on roll to attend every day as long as they are well enough to do so. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from education it is essential that they attend school regularly and punctually. They should only be absent from school when it is absolutely necessary. Children are only expected to attend school for 190 days each academic year.

We believe that children will attend school regularly if it is a happy and secure place and we work hard to create an environment where every child is valued.

School absence will disrupt a child's learning and may affect their academic progress. It may also disrupt their friendships and impact on their social and emotional development. Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.

School attendance is given a high profile throughout the school because we know how important it is. It is discussed at school assemblies, parents' evenings, staff meetings and governors' meetings. It is also included in school reports and newsletters. We also provide visual displays highlighting the importance of good attendance and punctuality in prominent positions within the school grounds.

Once enrolled at a school, parents have a legal responsibility as outlined in The Education Act 1996 to ensure that their child attends regularly and on time.

### **Expectations**

#### **Pupils**

- They will attend school regularly
- They will arrive on time, appropriately dressed and prepared for the day
- They will have the opportunities to discuss their absence with their class teacher if they wish to do so.

#### **Parents**

- They will encourage their child to attend school
- They will contact the school office when their child is absent before 9.00am
- They will ensure their child is appropriately dressed taking account of the school's uniform policy and is well prepared for the day according to weather forecast or planned activities.

#### **School**

- Will provide a safe learning environment
- Will provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns
- Will keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality
- Will contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence. Any unexplained absences will be followed up daily.
- Will encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of rewards
- Will refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Social Welfare Service

## **Registration Procedures**

The school register is a legal document and therefore the marking of the register is important and needs to be accurate.

The doors open at 8:50am, the school day begins at 9.00am and registers will be taken punctually at this time. Any child not in the classroom at this time will be marked as absent. Any child arriving after this time will need to be signed in at the school office and will be marked as late using an L in the register. The registers will close at 9.15am and any child arriving after this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence using a U in the register.

## **If A Child Is Absent**

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record their absence on the register.

It is important that parents and carers inform the school of absence as soon as possible.

If school has not been informed of the reason for absence by the time the register closes, the school office will contact the parent to find out why. This may also mean that more than one of the contact numbers school hold for the child will be contacted to find out the reasons for the child's absence. Good practice would be for the school to have at least 3 contact numbers for each child.

If your child is sick and the sickness continues for more than a few days we would expect you to consult your doctor.

If your child's attendance falls below 95%, which is the rate at below which the Department for Education class a child as being persistently absent from school, you may be invited in to a School Attendance Panel meeting or your child's attendance may be referred to the Education Social Welfare Service.

Failure by a parent to attend School Attendance Panel Meetings or cooperate with the Locality Attendance Team can lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued or a parent being prosecuted in the magistrates' courts. If a child is absent from school for a continuous period of four weeks and no contact is made with school, then the child may be referred to the Local Authority as a Child Missing Education.

## **Lateness**

Punctuality is crucial. Lateness in to school causes disruption to the child's learning and also to that of other pupils in the class.

Children need to be in school on time at 8.50am each day when the registration period begins. It's important that all children make a good start to the day and are ready to learn. If a child arrives after 9.00am but before 9.15am [when registers close] they will be given a late mark [L]. Children who arrive late are often embarrassed and may not be in the best frame of mind to begin learning. They may miss out on important activities pertinent to the day's learning. If children arrive after 9.15am [when registers close] they will be marked with a U which equates to an unauthorised absence.

## **Holidays in Term Time**

Parents are discouraged from withdrawing their children from school in term time for family holidays because this may impact on their progress. Head Teachers may only authorise holidays in term time in **exceptional** circumstances. Parents who believe their circumstances are exceptional are asked to complete an Application for Leave of Absence form. This form should be returned to the school well in advance of the proposed leave and before committing to any expense. **Parents who withdraw their child for unauthorised holidays in term time may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.**

## **Monitoring Attendance**

The attendance of all pupils will be monitored regularly.

Letters reminding parents about the importance of good attendance will be sent termly, together with the child's own attendance percentage.

If a child's attendance becomes a cause for concern school will write to the parent.

If the attendance falls below 95% a letter will be sent to the parent and they may be invited to attend a meeting with Mrs Charlotte Williams (Deputy Headteacher) and a member of the Locality Attendance team. During this meeting an Action Plan will be agreed to try and improve your child's attendance.

## **Reward Systems**

Our school has a system of rewards for children whose attendance is good, excellent or has improved significantly. These include individual certificates which are given out at the end of each term.